



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

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In Reply Refer to:
(6300, 6510)
NV030.06

JUN 04 2015

NOTICE OF PROPOSED ACTION **LANDS IN WILDERNESS**

STATE: Nevada

COUNTY: Humboldt and Washoe

OFFICE: Black Rock Field Office
Winnemucca District
5100 East Winnemucca Blvd.
Winnemucca, Nevada 89445

WILDERNESS AREAS: High Rock Lake Wilderness (N74465)
Little High Rock Canyon Wilderness (N74466)
East Fork High Rock Canyon Wilderness (N74464)
High Rock Canyon Wilderness (N74467)

PROPOSED ACTION: Paleontological Research and Collection

Background

The High Rock Lake Wilderness, Little High Rock Canyon Wilderness, High Rock Canyon Wilderness and East Fork High Rock Canyon Wilderness were designated with the passage of the Black Rock Desert-High Rock Canyon-Emigrant Trails National Conservation Area Act (NCA Act) (2000) (Amended 2001). With the passage of the Black Rock Desert-High Rock Canyon-Emigrant Trails National Conservation Area Act 2000 (NCA Act) and the Wilderness Act of 1964, Wilderness Areas are to be managed to preserve and protect their wilderness character and to provide for their use and enjoyment by the American people, in such a manner that will leave it unimpaired for future use and enjoyment as wilderness, and will allow for recreational, scenic, scientific, educational, conservation and historical use.

Scientific uses of cultural resources are permissible as long as they are not inconsistent with wilderness preservation (Manual 6340 Sec. 1.6 C.5). The NCA Resource Management Plan (RMP) (2004) and the Wilderness Management Plan (2012) directs paleontological inventories to be focused on the west arm of the Black Rock Desert, Soldier Meadows and the Black Rock Wilderness (RMP: PAL-1 and Black Rock Desert-High Rock Canyon Emigrant Trails National Conservation Area Wilderness Management Plan [WMP] p. 30). Excavations less than one cubic meter may be authorized to gather information in support of permitted archeological or paleontological research efforts within the wilderness areas with the provision that all excavations would be restored to their previous natural appearance at the end of the site visit (WMP p. 30).

Description of the Proposed Action

Sierra College of Rocklin, California, proposes to continue inventory and conduct limited collection (up to 1 m² of excavation) within High Rock Lake Wilderness, Little High Rock Canyon Wilderness, East Fork High Rock Canyon Wilderness, and High Rock Canyon Wilderness. Sierra College has conducted inventories and collections in the past under a permit issued by the BLM, Nevada State Office which allows for inventory of vertebrate fossils and collection of fossils from less than a total of 1 m² area. A Minimum Requirements Decision Guide was completed for Sierra College's proposal to conduct the inventory and collection.

Under the proposed action, a crew of 9 people would set up camp and project staging area outside the wilderness. Sites to be recorded and excavated are located within wilderness boundaries and would be accessed by foot. Fossils to be recorded and collected would be those that are visible on the surface. When fossils are at the surface they are subject to erosion and vandalism. Sierra College proposes to collect these specimens with the use hand tools (trowels and picks). Collected specimens would be preserved at Sierra College of Rocklin. Only small amounts of soil would be displaced and would be replaced immediately after fossil removal. The area would be smoothed so that no evidence of disturbance remains. No plants would be disturbed. The activities would occur during the summer of 2015. Collected data and reports would be shared with the BLM.

The professor leading this research is aware of the sage-grouse lek buffer in place, as well as the times associated with peak breeding times throughout the day. A map has been provided to Sierra College outlining these sensitive areas.

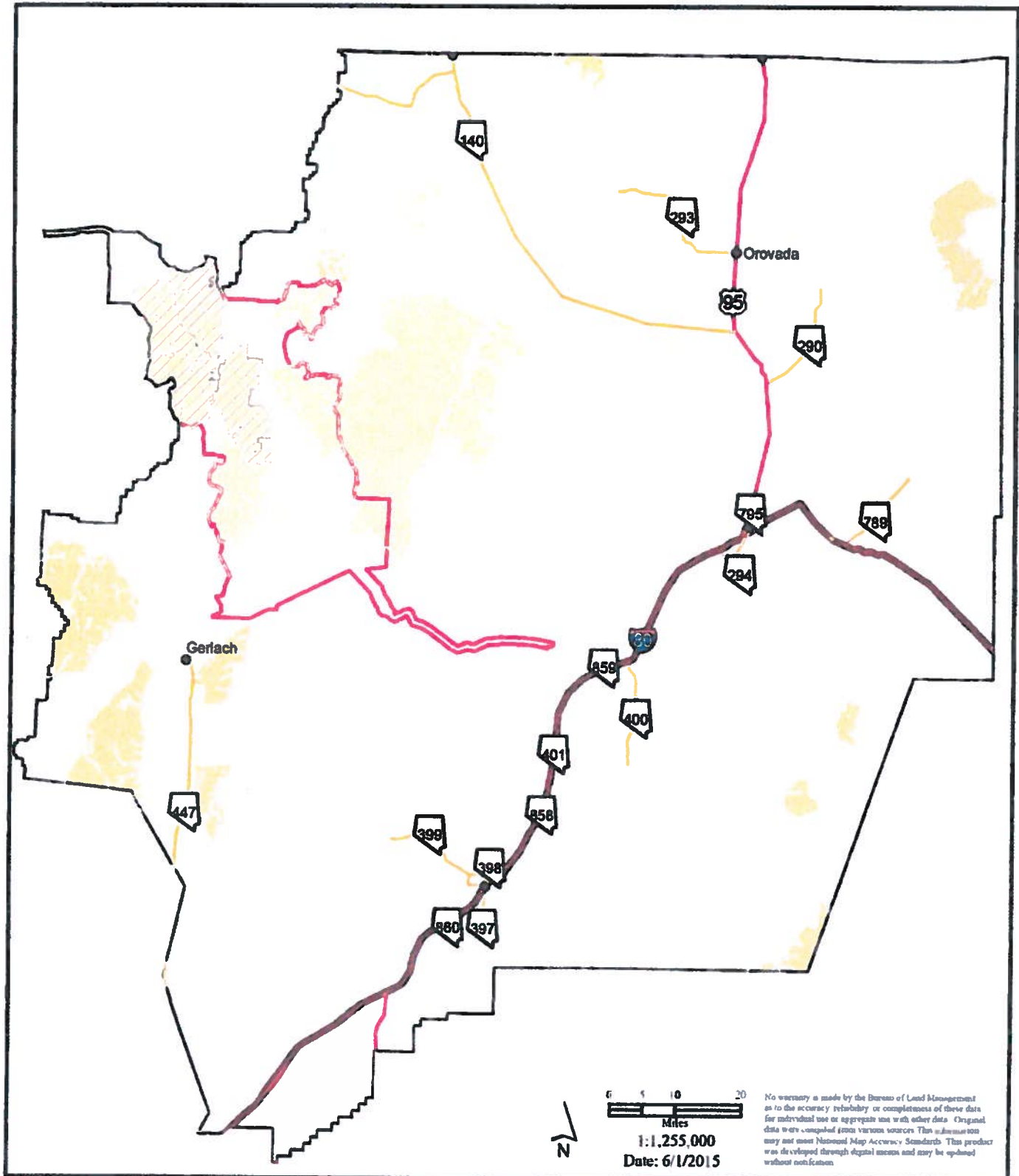
This is also your opportunity to consult with the BLM under the National Historic Preservation Act.

Please send your comments on the proposed activity to William Mack Jr., Black Rock Field Office Manager at the address above within 30 days from the date of this letter.


Gene Seidlitz
District Manager
Winnemucca District


Date

Proposed Paleontological Research and Collection Areas



No warranty is made by the Bureau of Land Management as to the accuracy, reliability, or completeness of these data for individual use or aggregate use with other data. Original data were compiled from various sources. This information may not meet National Map Accuracy Standards. This product was developed through digital means and may be updated without notification.

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Winnemucca, NV. 89445

Roads
Interstate
US Highway
State Route
Motorized Access Routes

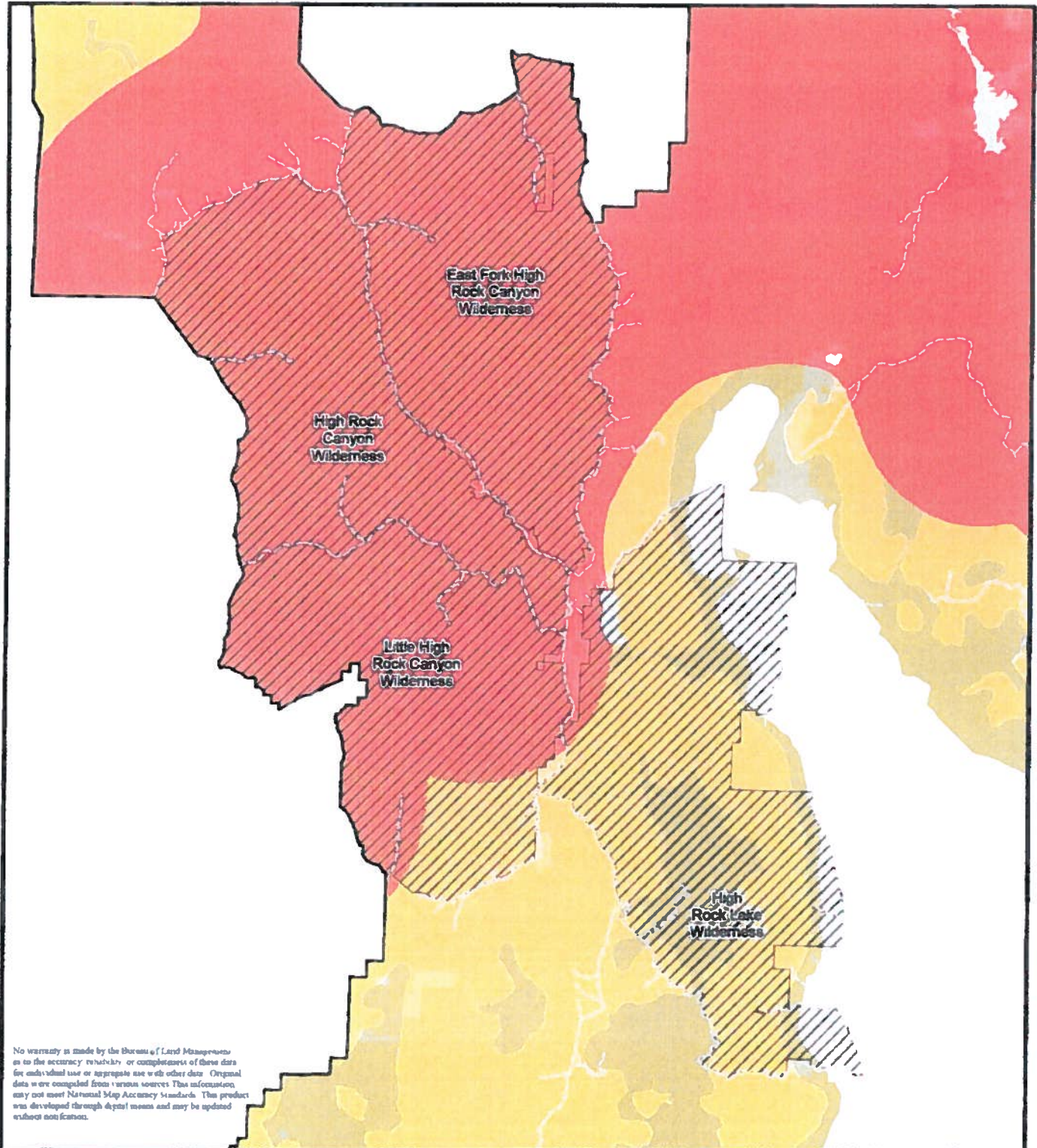
Winnemucca District
BLM NCA
BLM WSA
Proposed Wilderness Areas for Research
BLM Wilderness*

Land Status
BIA
BLM
BR
DOD
FS
FWS
NVST
PVT
WTR



* Pine Forest Range Wilderness General boundary depiction only, subject to provisions outlined in P.L. 113-291, Sec. 3064

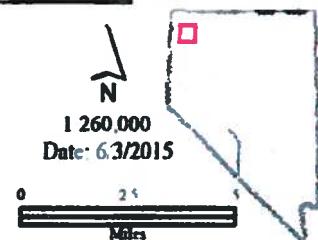
Sage-grouse Habitat Surrounding Proposed Paleontological Research and Collection Areas

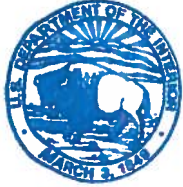


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Winnemucca, NV 89445

- Motorized Access Routes**
- Proposed Wilderness Areas for Research**
- Winnemucca District**

- Sage Grouse Habitat**
- 1) Core
 - 2) Priority
 - 3) General
- Land Status**
- BIA
 - BLM
 - PVT
 - WTR





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In Reply Refer To:
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NOTICE OF PROPOSED ACTION LANDS IN WILDERNESS

STATE: Nevada

COUNTY: Humboldt

OFFICE: Winnemucca District
5100 East Winnemucca Blvd.
Winnemucca, Nevada 89445

WILDERNESS AREAS: South Jackson Wilderness (N774469)

PROPOSED ACTION:

Background

The South Jackson Mountain Wilderness (SJW) was designated through the passage of the Black Rock Desert-High Rock Canyon-Emigrant Trails National Conservation Area Act 2000 (NCA Act). Wilderness Areas are to be managed to preserve and protect their wilderness character and to provide for their use and enjoyment by the American people, in such a manner that will leave it unimpaired for future use and enjoyment as wilderness, and will allow for recreational, scenic, scientific, educational, conservation and historical use (NCA Act and the Wilderness Act of 1964). Management of activities within wilderness areas is guided by designating legislation, BLM policies (BLM Manual 6340), and local plans (Black Rock Resource Management Plan [2004] and the Wilderness Management Plan [2012]).

The southern boundary of the SJW follows a two-track jeep trail along Shawnee Creek. On the east side of the SJW the two-track road is eroded to the point of impassability. On the west side, the vegetation along the center of the road has grown to a point that may hinder public land users from using the road. As a result, public land users have been driving into the wilderness at various points to avoid the degraded road on the east, and the perceivable impassable road on the west. These areas where vehicle use has occurred in the wilderness are determined to be vehicle trespasses.

Description of the Proposed Action

The BLM is proposing to repair the two-track road on the east side of the southern boundary of the SJW. This two-track is a boundary road and falls outside of the wilderness. Reparations would be completed at

the end of June 2015 with the use of a back hoe. Once the two-track road has been repaired, the BLM would install barriers at the points where vehicle ingress to the wilderness areas have occurred. Barriers would be installed through the use of post-hole diggers, shovels, pipe and cement. The trespasses would also be rehabilitated through raking and vertical mulching.

Barriers where trespasses have occurred on the west side of the SJW along Shawnee Creek would also be installed and the trespasses would be rehabilitated through raking and vertical mulching. The vegetation from the center of the two-track road would be used for vertical mulching purposes.

The proposed action is considered to be routine maintenance.

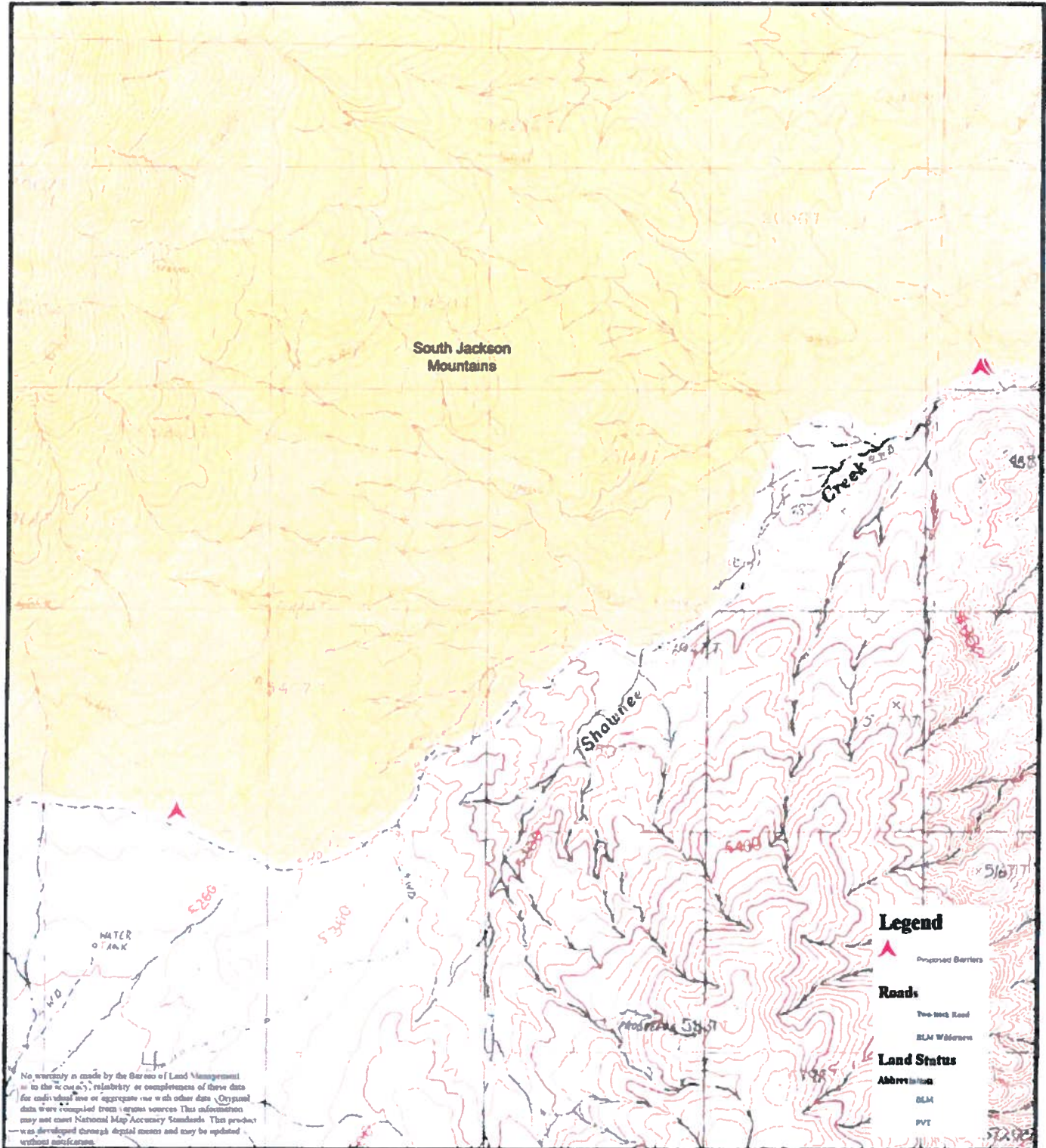
This is also your opportunity to consult with the BLM under the National Historic Preservation Act.

Please send your comments on the proposed activity to William Mack Jr., Black Rock Field Office Manager at the address above within 30 days of the date of this letter.


Gene Seidlitz
District Manager
Winnemucca District

6/4/15
Date

South Jackson Wilderness Trespass Rehabilitation



Winnemucca District
Bureau of Land Management
5100 E. Winnemucca Blvd
Winnemucca, NV. 89445

USGS 24k Maps:
Red Butte and Donna Schee Spring
T.37 N., R.31 E., secs. 03 and 08



North Arrow: N
Scale: 1:24,000
Date: 6/1/2015





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JUN 09 2015

In Reply Refer To:
6300
(NV030.06)

NOTICE OF PROPOSED ACTION **LANDS IN WILDERNESS STUDY AREAS**

STATE: Nevada

COUNTY: Pershing

FIELD OFFICE: Humboldt River Field Office
5100 East Winnemucca Blvd.
Winnemucca, Nevada 89445

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA: Augusta Mountains Wilderness Study Area (NV-030-108)

PROPOSED ACTION: Excavation and removal of Ichthyosaur remains for study and preservation.

Background

In 2014, the Nevada State Office of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) received an application from Dr. Martin Sander, University of Bonn, Germany and the Dinosaur Institute, Los Angeles County Museum (LACM) for a Paleontological Resources Use Permit for excavation and removal of Early and Middle Triassic ichthyosaur remains from three localities in the Augusta Mountains Wilderness Study Area (WSA) in Pershing County. The proposed excavations were in the vicinity of an ichthyosaur excavated in 2008 and analyzed in Environmental Assessment NV-020-08-EA-08. In 2014, BLM completed DNA DOI-BLM-NV-W0-2014-0023 on the newly proposed ichthyosaur excavations and the paleontologists commenced work in August of 2014. Dr. Sander is planning to return in August of 2015 to continue these excavations.

The Augusta Mountains WSA is located in a very remote area of the Winnemucca District, approximately 2 hours from either Winnemucca, NV or Lovelock, NV. This area was nominated as a WSA based on outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation including hiking, camping, sightseeing and photography throughout the WSA. Supplemental values include spectacular views as well as archaeological and paleontological values.

Proper excavation and scientific study of the specimens will allow scientists to further our understanding of Early and Middle Triassic ichthyosaurs. Dr. Martin Sanders is currently working with the BLM to help interpret ichthyosaur fossils from Northern Nevada to the general public. An exhibit in the Humboldt

Museum in Winnemucca will include information on recent finds and a website will be updatable as studies of excavated fossils reveal more information.

In addition to the scientific and educational value of the project, these unique finds will also be better protected. Theft of other significant vertebrate fossils has occurred in this area recent years. While law enforcement and other BLM personnel have continued to monitor the area to the degree possible, the remoteness of the site poses special challenges for protection of these unique values. The recovered specimens would be curated at the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County.

Management guidance for such an activity is found in BLM Manual 6330 Management of Wilderness Study Areas. Under this manual, paleontological resources are considered supplemental values and are an important part of the wilderness characteristics of WSAs. Stabilizing, recovering and recording important information of paleontological finds may be allowed in WSAs.

Description of the Proposed Action

A crew of approximately 4-5 individuals would excavate the fossils using small mechanical tools only, including hammers, chisels, pry bars, and shovels. No power tools or generators would be used. Small amounts of plaster and/or glue may be used to protect exposed portions of the skeleton.

The proposed 2015 excavation would commence July 27 and would be completed by August 22. A base-camp would be set up outside of the WSA and the crew would hike to and from the excavation sites each day. All equipment would be hand-carried to and from the sites. The hike from base-camp to the sites would be approximately 2 to 2.5 hours and would include an elevation gain of up to 2,400 feet. Any trash would be taken out of the field and properly disposed of.

The ichthyosaur fossils are close to the surface with very little soil covering them. A small trench of a maximum of 10' long, 4' wide, and 3' deep would be excavated at each of the 3 localities. The amount of excavated soil is anticipated to be small. The back dirt piles at each locality are anticipated to be no more than 5' x 5' in size. The original soil layer would be kept separate from the bedrock material. After the specimen is completely excavated, the trench would be refilled, first with the bedrock material then with the soil on top.

The area contains sagebrush and juniper, as well as a variety of grasses and small shrubs and forbs. However, the habitat at the site consists of a late seral Juniper community with very limited sagebrush/forb understory. One of the 3 excavation sites is in sage-grouse Preliminary General Habitat. However, since the disturbance would be temporary and the trench would be refilled, minimal-to-no impact to sage-grouse would be expected.

Due to the terrain and the weight of the blocks, the excavated specimen would be transported out of the field by helicopter. The helicopter would not land in the WSA. The pilot would maneuver the aircraft over the area and hover while the blocks are hoisted into a transport sling attached to the helicopter by a sling line. Once loaded, the block would be ferried in a sling load fashion beneath the aircraft to the nearest road outside of the WSA. This would require approximately 5-10 flying minutes each way. It is estimated that a maximum of 10 round-trip flights would be required.

Because hand tools would be used, excavation would not impact opportunities for primitive recreation or solitude except for the very brief time the helicopter would be used to remove the materials. Excavation would minimally impact naturalness during the period of activity, but the sites are small, the activities are temporary, and reclamation involving re-contouring or re-vegetation would not be required. Natural weathering would return the sites to a natural-appearing condition shortly after the excavations are

completed (1-2 years, depending on precipitation). Thus, the proposed excavations would not disqualify the area from wilderness designation.

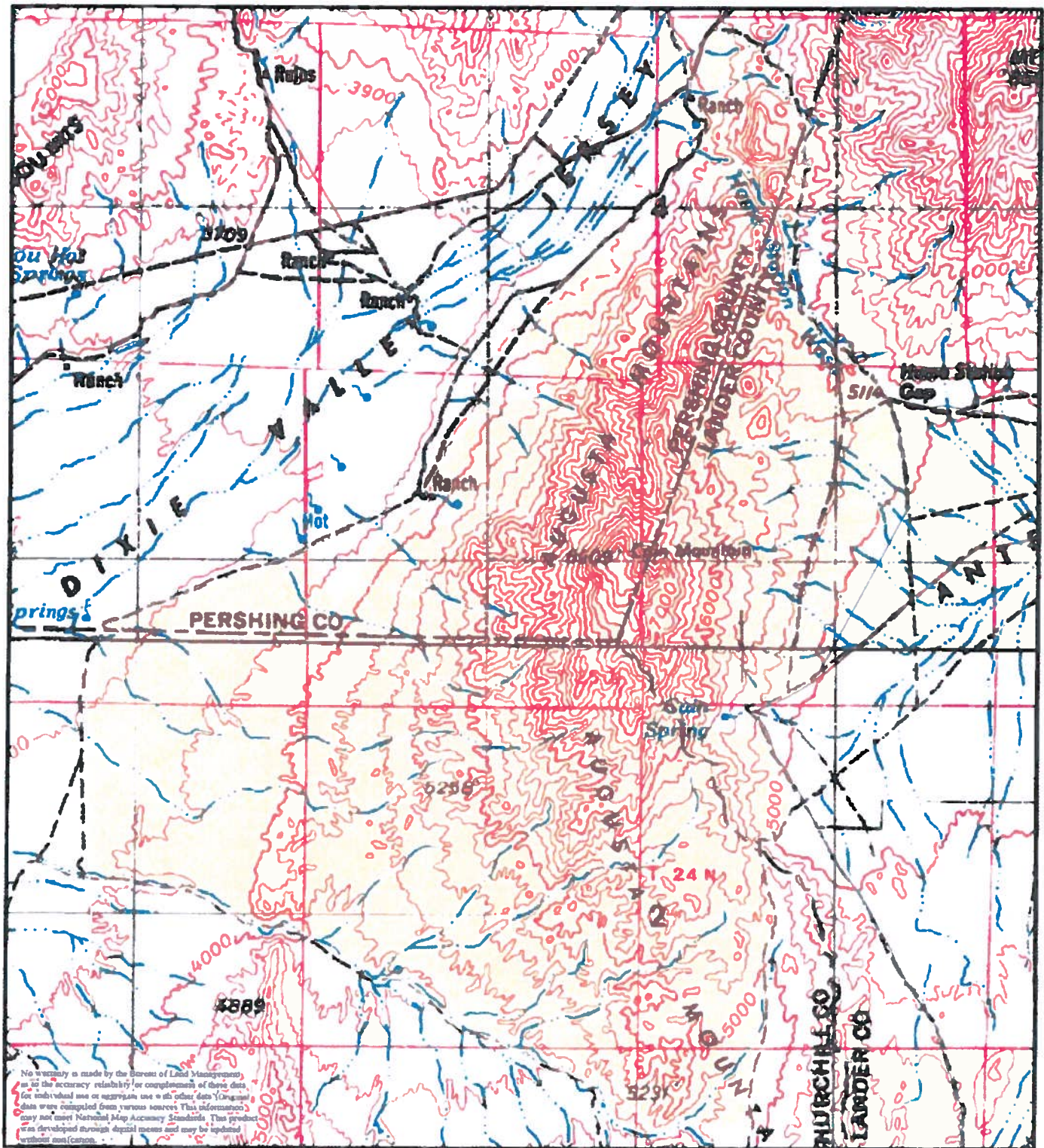
This is also your opportunity to consult with the BLM under the National Historic Preservation Act.


Please send comments regarding this activity to Jim Schroeder, Humboldt River Field Office Field Manager, at the address above within 30 days of the date of this letter.


Gene Seidlitz
Winnemucca District Manager


Date

Ichthyosaur Excavation - Augusta Wilderness Study Area






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5100 E. Winnemucca Blvd
Winnemucca, NV. 89445

Roads

BLM WSA
Primitive Road

Land Status
Abbreviation

BLM
PVT



1:150,000
Date: 6/1/2015

